

A message from Cllr Clare Coghill
Leader of Waltham Forest Council



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update



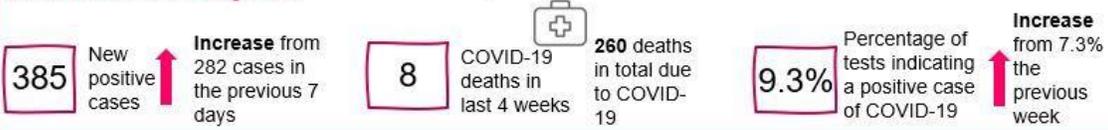
As Halloween approaches on Saturday, I know you might usually be getting ready for a spooktacular house party with friends, or heading out as a large group to go trick or treating in your finest costumes. It's disappointing we cannot celebrate Halloween in this usual way, but this is the time we need to be vigilant and follow the guidelines, protecting us all from this nightmare virus.

When these holidays or celebrations occur, I know how tempting it can be to meet indoors with friends or family. But we all need to remember that being in the High alert level means we shouldn't be meeting indoors with anyone we do not live with and should only be meeting outdoors in groups of six. By following this and taking preventative measures (wash hands, cover face, make space) you will be actively helping to protect people from coronavirus, a virus that is still very much around as you can see from the below figures.

To hear more about why it's so important to follow these rules at the moment, [watch our video with Director of Public Health, Joe McDonnell](#).

Hope you all have a spectacularly safe and spooky time this Saturday.

In the last 7 days... COVID-19 cases up to 23 October 2020



Got symptoms? Get tested



As we move through the pandemic, it's easy for us to become less alert to the coronavirus symptoms but we all need to remember what they are and what to do if we experience these.

So if you experience a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of smell or taste then you must self-isolate with your household and book yourself a test. We have three testing sites across Waltham Forest and there is also the home testing option available as well.

To book your test, call 119 or book online.

[**Book your test**](#)

Enjoy Halloween safely



Are you heading out this Saturday?

If you decide to go trick or treating on Saturday, please make sure you keep yourselves and others safe by only meeting indoors with the people you live with, only meeting outdoors in groups of six and keeping two metres from anyone you do not live with.

We know this can be an anxious time for people, so if you do not want trick or treaters knocking this year, why not download and print our window poster so families know not to visit?

If you see one of these posters, please respect it and don't knock.

We wish you all a spooky and safe Halloween!

[**Download the poster**](#)

Jobs are our residents' top priority



Last week we launched our public service strategy and a key priority for residents is connecting people with jobs as one of the challenges to recovery from COVID-19.

We are planning a Jobs Summit to be hosted by the Council in partnership with businesses, organisations and charities, a [range of pledges](#) will be agreed that will prioritise local people in the borough and create opportunities with a particular focus on young people as well as those disproportionately affected over recent months.

[Watch the video from Kiechelle](#) - a lecturer at the Adult Learning Service on how she has adapted and continues to provide training to residents.

Public Service Strategy

Picture caption: Kye Mitchell is a new starter at the former EMD Cinema in Walthamstow

Get job advice at our free Virtual Job Fair



Want to know what employers expect from applicants? Or how to find and apply for jobs?

Join us and speakers from top employers at 2pm on Thursday 19 November 2020 for our free Virtual Job Fair!

Topics include job application tips, apprenticeships, upcoming jobs, and free training and courses.

Learn about working in a wide range of sectors including the civil service, healthcare, childcare, education, security, energy and recruitment.

This is an online event. You can use your smartphone, tablet or computer. You don't need special software just an internet connection and a web browser.

Virtual job fair

Have you met our Stay Safe Champions?



Last week, we launched our Stay Safe Champions, a mixture of staff and resident volunteers who have committed to help inform residents and local businesses about coronavirus guidelines, letting them know how to keep themselves and others safe.

So far, we have attended local colleges, Leyton Mills, Leyton and Walthamstow Central tube stations and over the next week will be heading to Highams Park and The Mall in Walthamstow.

If you are interested in signing up to become a Stay Safe Champion, then head over to the website where you can read more and apply.

[Stay Safe Champions](#)

Digital Month is on it's way



For Digital Month 2020, Waltham Forest has lots of online sessions happening for residents to learn new skills.

The Adult Learning Service has several free digital skills workshops for adults aged 19 and over, where you can learn more about Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, how to use Zoom meeting, designing your own WordPress website and how to edit videos in Microsoft Photos. These workshops will be online via zoom and there are lots of sessions to choose from.

Local businesses can also learn new skills to support their business in the digital age through online sessions run by our Business Team.

We'll also be holding online focus groups to gather feedback from residents about our current website and MyAccount, helping us plan our future digital programme.

[Find an event](#)

Black History Month business profile: Asari St. Hill



Meet Asari St. Hill, an action coach based in Chingford, who helps local businesses develop and grow.

In the last of our series looking at the business community for #BlackHistoryMonth 2020, Asari tells us a bit about his recent successes and why he is proud to live in the diverse community of Waltham Forest.

[Watch the video](#)

Coronavirus guidelines: Translated.



We know how confusing it can be for any resident to understand new guidelines, as these can change quickly and often.

Part of the work we're doing is to make sure every resident can access and understand the coronavirus guidelines, and be able to protect themselves against the virus.

We have translated updated guidelines into our top 12 languages including Bengali, Tamil and Urdu.

We've also got easy read materials for any residents who have a learning difficulty and videos using BSL (British Sign Language) too.

If you know anyone that would find these materials useful, please do share the web page with them.

[Get accessible info](#)

Make your home go green



We successfully bid for just under £1m from the national Green Homes Grant scheme to retrofit energy efficient measures in some Council homes and make grants available for private homeowners.

The Council's scheme provides up to £10,000 for lower income owner-occupiers in home with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rated E, F or G. Lower income means an income less than £30,000.

Email [the service store](#) or call 020 8496 5525 to register your interest. If you don't know if your house has an EPC, contact us and we can help with this. If you don't qualify, you can still make an application from the national Green Homes scheme.

[Apply for the scheme](#)

Learning through play from home



For fun ways to help your children learn and improve your wellbeing, book a family online learning course with Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service.

One parent said our online keeping up with maths course gave them 'an incredible increase in knowledge and confidence. I can teach my son maths in a better way. Our teacher Cherie is amazing ... if we couldn't understand something she taught us again to ensure we were confident'.

From parenting tips to creative and dance courses, choose a course for you and your family today!

Most of our courses are free and will teach you skills to boost your self-confidence.

[Explore our courses](#)

Council Services



Our staff are continuing to work hard to deliver services to our residents, adapting these to make them safe where required.

[Find out more](#)



Information and advice regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) is changing quickly and its important you keep up to date with those changes. The Council will be using email newsletters to keep residents and businesses up to date.

If residents have questions please visit our [website](#), and use live chat to talk to one of our team, it's quicker than phoning.



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